

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2017, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE YOUTH  
CENTER, SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

Dr. Patrick Duffy, Vice Chairman; Karen Bertoni, Paul Fracasse, Michael O'Donnell.  
Staff: Sandra Petela, Acting Director; Elizabeth Mayne, Program Coordinator, Mark  
Cunningham, Supt. PW and Grounds.

Absent: James Nankin, Dan Nowak, Steve Trifone

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Duffy called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Clerk called the roll and determined a quorum was present.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

**3. MINUTES, OCTOBER 4, 2017**

MOTION by Mr. O'Donnell; seconded by Mr. Fracasse

MOVED to approve the minutes of October 4, 2017 subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

Corrections: Mr. Trifone was present at this meeting; Ms. Bertoni's name was spelled incorrectly and changed.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

**4. COUNCIL LIAISON – Peter Talbot (not present)**

**5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

In the absence of Chairman Nankin, the report was given by Dr. Duffy.

**a. Communications**

Dr. Duffy informed the Commission that Ms. Petela received an e-mail from Laura Francis requesting approval to place wind chimes on a tree at Bartlem Park playground area in memory of her nephew, Nicholas Francis.

The Commissioners discussed this request. Ms. Bertoni noted this could open up other people wants to do similar things in the parks, and stated a bench could be purchased rather than wind chimes.

Ms. Petela pointed out that wind chimes on a tree could become a Public Works issue with maintenance of the trees in the park.

It was suggested by Mr. O'Donnell that Ms. Francis be informed about purchasing a memorial bench with a plaque in honor of her nephew.

Following discussion, Ms. Petela was asked to communicate with Ms. Francis and advise her of the opportunity to purchase a memorial bench.

Dr. Duffy informed the Commission that a letter was received from Town Manager Milone regarding the status of a new Recreation Director. He read the letter into the record of the meeting, which cited the fact that nine (9) qualified candidates were interviewed by outside Parks and Rec officials. There will be 3 to 5 final candidates for final interviews, and Mr. Milone will announce the new Director next week. Prior to this announcement, Mr. Milone will contact the Parks and Rec Commissioners of the name of the new Director.

**b. Outdoor Ice Rink – Sandy Petela**

The Commissioners were told by Ms. Petela that there are some issues with installation of the rink by PW crews. The rink is still wrapped up and stored in the Parks garage. The rink does not fit the proposed location at the Youth Center property tennis courts, as it is too wide. The outside dimensions of the rink are 72 ft. x 90 ft.

Mr. Cunningham advised that brackets could be added on each side of the rink, but it will stick out, and a light pole would be in the way.

The PW crews will put up the rink, and Ms. Petela said the Commission and Town Council purchased the rink, with the Commission determining the location. The rink must be installed by the end of November or early December. She explained that the new tennis court surface has a 20 year warranty; it is not designed to support 110,000 pounds of water; and if the surface were to crack the warranty is voided. Therefore, the tennis courts cannot be the location for the rink. When the rink is in operation, it requires resurfacing with water via a spray hose. When the rink was purchased, the spike supports were cut off, and this causes a problem with using a grass surface on which to place the rink.

The Commissioners reviewed the issues with the rink and maintenance. This outdoor rink requires a water supply; brackets are needed for a hard surface installation; it will be maintained by PW and Parks crew members; a walking path is needed to access the rink; the area around the rink must be plowed for public access and safety; other than the Youth Center location, there would be no bathrooms for public use or available outdoor lighting; rental of portable bathrooms is \$45 a month; and the rink would not be monitored. If the Youth Center building was not open, the public would not have bathroom access or lighting.

At the November 13<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting, the "outdoor rink" will be discussed as an agenda item.

There was a discussion about other park locations for the rink, i.e. Quinnipiac Park, Cheshire Park and Bartlem Park. Mr. Cunningham stated the Cheshire Park tennis courts and basketball court were measured, and the basketball court is too small for the size of the rink. At Bartlem Park there is no area wide enough, and the parking lot at the community pool was also looked at as a possible location. He said the Quinnipiac Park area would be the best location for the rink; this is a hard surface; and the area is fenced in.

If Quinnipiac is the best location, Dr. Duffy asked about benches for people to sit on, put on skates, and if picnic tables could be moved to the area where the rink is placed.

Ms. Petela stated that she contacted surrounding towns that have had rinks in past winters, and learned they are not installing outdoor ice rinks this year. The major reason cited by town officials was vandalism at the rink sites.

With regard to the size of the rink, Mr. Cunningham said it could be reduced by moving panels in between, cutting the liner, and using brackets. In looking at the cost of brackets, they are \$10 each, and this rink would need 70 brackets. The cost would be \$700 plus shipping costs. The rink has plastic sideboards.

Ms. Mayne and Mr. Cunningham also looked at the grass area by the Bartlem Park concession stand as a possible site for the rink. There is water at this location, but it is turned off for the winter, and they discussed how to get water to the rink for re-filling and re-surfacing. At the basketball court (Youth Center) about 60 feet could be used, but the rink would hit poles on both sides, with a loss of about 10 feet. Ms. Mayne said with the rink on the basketball court, kids would probably play basketball on the rink, so the rims would have to be taken down for the winter.

Right now, Ms. Petela said "timing" is the issue as the location of the rink must be selected within a month. She noted this rink was customized in size for Cheshire.

Mr. Cunningham explained that to install the rink at the Youth Center, panels would have to be cut, and the rink re-sized. He will check on the "pitch" of the basketball court.

It was recommended by Dr. Duffy that the issue of the outdoor ice skating rink be postponed until next year. He commented on the worst thing being installation of the rink, lack of accessible water supply, icing, and people unable to use the rink.

The Commission decided to authorize Ms. Petela and Mr. Cunningham to do further research on location of the rink, inform the Commissioners on their recommendations on whether the rink can or cannot be installed within the time frame required.

MOTION by Mr. Fracasse; seconded by Ms. Bertoni

MOVED that the Parks and Rec Commission authorizes Acting Director Petela and PW Supervisor Cunningham to do further research and investigation on the location for the outdoor ice skating rink, and try to reduce the size of the rink for it to fit on the basketball court at the Youth Center location.

#### Discussion

If the rink is located at Quinnipiac Park, Mr. Cunningham said a large hose could be run from the treatment plan for a water source.

Ms. Petela advised that the Town Council and Town Manager have implemented a spending freeze for all departments, and their approval would be required to purchase the brackets for the rink. She asked if the Cheshire Fire Department would assist with provision of water for the ice rink.

Regarding snow removal, Mr. Cunningham explained that PW crews would have to clear snow from the rink surface, and make a safe path for public to access the rink.

Ms. Petela raised the issue of town liability for people using the rink, and said there would have to be a sign stating "Skating at your own risk". Other towns have this signage, along with prohibition of pets and ice hockey on the rink.

Dr. Duffy noted that placement and maintenance of the skating rink are the major issues.

Mr. O'Donnell said the rink issue can go to the Council with options that work for everything needed...lights, bathrooms, water sources, reducing size of the rink...to make it all work out.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

#### **c.     Food Trucks/Concession Stand Subcommittee – Michael O'Donnell**

Mr. O'Donnell reported that the committee was unable to meet due to work schedules. However, he did some research on food trucks at events. He received information from Chesprocott on food truck temporary permits, which must be secured two weeks prior to an event. These permits are one-day permits; there are currently four approved food truck vendors on the list; three parks (Bartlem, Mixville, Quinnipiac) are available for food trucks which use only the paved surfaces, and are off the grass areas.

According to Ms. Petela each park could have the maximum number of food trucks at one event. The Soccer Club wanted a food truck for their jamboree event. CYB has already had food trucks at opening day, but without going through the permit process. Next year, CYB will have to coordinate with the Recreation Department in order to have food trucks and insure permits are taken out. With regard to these food trucks, Ms. Petela advised there is a charge of \$25 to \$50 per food truck at an event in the parks.

She recommends there be a flat fee for food trucks at parks during events, and this would be a revenue generator.

Mr. O'Donnell will have a subcommittee report on food trucks at the December meeting.

**6. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE – Michael O'Donnell**

The planting season has ended, and Mr. O'Donnell said committee work will slow down. Cheshire Park/Stony Hill Road area has Junipers which are covered with weeds, poison ivy and sumac, and they will be removed in the spring.

**7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – SANDY PETELA**

**a. Parks Update**

The parks will be closing down for the winter; bathrooms will be closed; water will be turned off; Lacrosse has an event the weekend of November 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Cunningham reported that seeding and fertilizing is going well at all parks with work done by PW and Parks crews. The department is working with a company, Tom Irwin, on field maintenance. It is a turf management company, and crews are working with them on field maintenance.

**b. Recreation Update – Elizabeth Mayne**

Basketball Season is starting; registration without penalty is through November 14<sup>th</sup>; help is needed with the basketball program depending on the number of teams, putting schedules together.

Winter Brochure – is in the process of being completed; programs start January 18<sup>th</sup> for the winter season; the brochure will be out November 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Commission was informed by Ms. Petela that a certain number of staff is needed for each basketball location. Parents help with coaching; there are instructors at each gym for training; practice is once a week starting with 4<sup>th</sup> graders.

**c. Dog Park Update**

The benches were approved and ordered. At a meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Petela, Mr. Milone and Ms. Salfeety met to review and discuss issues at this park. Ms. Petela also met with Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Pruitt at the dog park to look at the gazebo, benches, agility area. The benches will be paid out of the dog park checking account. Fencing for the agility area will be measured by Public Works, and cost will be out of the dog park checking account. Things can move forward with the dog park, and PW crews got work done this fall at the park.

**d. Memorial Bench Update**

Mr. Petela reported that the cost of installation of a bench will be added to the cost of purchasing a memorial bench. In the past people only paid for the bench and plaque,

not installation. She is working with M. O'Brien Company for benches and installation. This company will not install a pre-fab bench.

**d. Budget Update**

Ms. Petela informed the Commissioners that there was a department head meeting with Town Manager Milone on October 20<sup>th</sup> on the financial status of the State and impact on the town. There is now a town wide spending and hiring freeze in place. Department heads went through their budgets, every line item, and had to cut 5% of their budget. The next department head meeting is November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and she will have an update to Commissioners after this meeting. The freeze plays a part in not hiring for Park and Rec programs.

The transition with Parks and Rec and Public Work departments is going well. There is very good communication and they meet on a bi-weekly schedule.

Community Pool – Ms. Petela stated all is going well at the pool facility.

Linear Park – when the leaf blowing at the trail, much of the stone dust was also blown away.

Halloween Walk – Ms. Mayne reported on this walk from Jarvis Street south; 21 kids participated with parent; they all received coloring books rather than candy treats; the walk was fun and enjoyed by everyone; it is hoped to expand this program next year.

**8. COMMISSIONER'S FORUM**

Ms. Bertoni thanked everyone for working together in the transition. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Fracasse and Dr. Duffy wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Ms. Bertoni; seconded by Mr. Fracasse.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk

